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REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES  
AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER  
ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Letter dated 3 July 1991 from the Permanent Representative of  
Syria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to enclose herewith the statement of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic on the Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Syrian Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, presented to the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories during its visit to Damascus, Syria, from 22 May to 25 May 1991.

I should be grateful if this statement were circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under item 73 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Dia-Allah EL-FATTAL  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative

\* A/46/50.

ANNEX

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic presented to the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

The Israeli occupation authorities are continuing their flagrant and deliberate violations of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, the 1949 Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and other international covenants. Furthermore, they continue to flout resolutions of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the relevant specialized agencies and to defy the entire international community, in occupied Palestine, the Syrian Golan and southern Lebanon alike.

The Syrian Golan, occupied since 1967, has continued to be subjected to the comprehensive and declared strategy of aggression pursued by the Israeli authorities, who maintain that the Golan is an inseparable part of Israel. Their activities, both open and covert, designed to Judaize and annex the Golan and strip its Syrian Arab population of their ethnic character and their history, have led to the continued establishment and expansion of settlements and the introduction of new immigrants from all parts of the world. This has become evident in the recent policy of bringing in vast numbers of Soviet refugees to the occupied territories, with a view to changing the composition of the population of the region and destroying its economic structure, expropriating its water resources and attempting to modify its socio-cultural characteristics and efface the identity of the indigenous inhabitants. They are thereby violating United Nations resolutions, specifically Security Council resolution 497 (1981), adopted unanimously on 17 December 1981, and the resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 5 February 1982 at its ninth emergency special session (ES-9/1) and reaffirmed since then at every regular session of the General Assembly.

In the face of these practices, our Syrian Arab people of the Golan have risen up with laudable bravery to resist the occupation, reaffirming on every occasion their attachment and allegiance to their Syrian Arab homeland, rejecting the occupation and the decision to impose Israeli laws and Israeli identity, defying the repressive Israeli authorities until the territory of the Golan is fully liberated and also giving their support and aid to the heroic intifadah of the Palestinian Arab people. Popular committees have been set up in order to receive donations in cash and in kind, thereby making it possible to send funds and large quantities of food and clothing by various means to their brothers in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. As a result of their stand of solidarity with their Palestinian brothers, the inhabitants

of the Golan have been exposed to brutal sanctions on the part of the occupation authorities.

The valiant resistance of the Arab people in the occupied Arab territories has led the occupiers to step up their means of repression there. They have escalated the "iron fist" policy and the practices of bone-breaking, murder, deportation, the destruction of houses and curfews lasting for days, a policy which constitutes a grave violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms, war crimes and the crime of genocide, which are subject to international sanctions. The world has witnessed these crimes, which have revealed that Zionist racism and its hatred of other peoples in general and of the Arab people in particular are what lies behind the commission of all these crimes, as an embodiment of its venom, the effects of which have long been apparent in many countries of the world. Nothing demonstrates that better than the statement made by Knesset Member Rehavam Ze'evi on 24 October 1989, when he said that one Jew is equal to a thousand Arabs. When asked whether he was ready to amend this statement, he said: "Yes, I am prepared to amend it, as follows: one Jew, 10,000 Arabs." These barbarous words were accompanied by an increase in the participation of Zionist settlers in crimes against Arab citizens in the occupied territories, under the protection of the Israeli occupation forces. The racism, aggression and anti-Arab thrust of these crimes were greater than those characterizing the measures taken by the Israeli occupation forces.

The long series of terrorist acts committed by the Israeli occupation forces brings to mind the savage and inhuman acts perpetrated by the racist Pretoria régime against the people of South Africa and the Nazi crimes committed against civilians in Europe during the Second World War. Further proof of that is the statement made by the Israeli Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Binyamin Netanyahu, before a meeting of students on 19 November 1989, in which he urged the need for a collective expulsion of the Arabs, and also the recent statements made by Israeli Minister Ariel Sharon on the need to settle Soviet Jewish immigrants in the occupied Arab territories in the place of the Arab population. Here we must warn once again of the dangers of the continuation of these practices, in view of the explosive situation in the region and the threat which it presents to international peace and security, which are entering a new stage now that confrontation and tension in the world have abated and an attempt is being made to establish the new international community based on the principles of justice, equality and fairness.

#### 1. Policy of annexation and settlement

Since Israel's occupation of the Syrian Golan in 1967, there has been a continuous policy of occupation aimed at annexing the Golan and Judaizing it by encouraging settlement there. In December 1981, Israel enacted a law imposing Israeli laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan and, on 12 February 1982, issued an order requiring the inhabitants of the Golan to carry Israeli identity cards.

Among the practices that most closely affect the national sentiments of the Golan Arabs is the Israeli authorities' attempt to impose mandatory conscription on youths there. The youths have just said: "We are Syrian Arabs, and the Golan Heights are occupied territory. It is not reasonable for us to serve in an army that is occupying our country". This issue is still alive and has been from the end of May 1990 up to the present. The occupation authorities are still applying pressure to the youths of the Golan to force them to abandon their national affiliation. This is totally contrary to all international laws and customs.

On the ruins of 147 Syrian Arab villages in the Syrian Golan which Israel has destroyed and of which only Majdal Shams, Mas'adah, Buq'ata, Ayn Qunyah and Al-Fajr remain, Israel has established a network of 43 settlements, comprising agricultural, industrial and tourist projects aimed at exploiting the wealth and resources of the region in order to annex and Judaize it, and it is in the process of completing three new settlements. These settlements draw water from Lake Tiberias, Baniyas and Mas'adah, and a number of earth dikes and tourist installations have been built on Mount Hermon and on the shores of Lake Tiberias. A denser road network has been constructed around the villages of the Arab Golan in preparation for cutting it off completely and destroying the existing population centres in order to remove all traces of Arab life and create the impression that the Golan is an uninhabited area. In 1966, the population of the Golan numbered 152,990, distributed over 313 population centres. Of this total, there are now only 15,000 persons left in the five Arab villages, as against 10,000 Israeli settlers. Israeli public sources indicate that the settlement plan for the Golan is aimed at settling approximately 100,000 Jewish immigrants, in order to impose a fait accompli and establish the occupation, in addition to the economic and defence advantages afforded by the settlements to the Zionist entity.

It should be noted that the Israeli authorities have recently begun to actively promote settlement in the Golan and to increase the number of settlers there. The most important developments in this connection are as follows:

(1) The Minister for Absorption in the Golan consented, in July 1989, to the establishment of three absorption centres at Katzrin, Khisfin and Mevo Hama in order to absorb 400 new immigrants who arrived at those settlements in 1990 (Davar, 18 July 1989);

(2) In August 1989, the Israelis began an effort to increase the number of settlers in the Golan from 6,000 to 12,000 over the next five years. On 5 August 1989, Knesset Member Micha Goldman called upon the Jewish Agency and the Ministry of Absorption to endeavour to send Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union and South America to the Golan (Ma'ariv, 6 August 1989);

(3) On 31 October 1989, a new settlement called "Had-Nes" was inaugurated in the southern Golan, able initially to absorb 12 families. The settlement was built by the Betar movement. This settlement was expanded in 1990 to increase its absorption capacity;

(4) The Israeli authorities admitted in May 1989 that 30 families of Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union had moved to take up residence in the Katz'rin settlement, as the first operation for the settlement of Soviet Jews in the Golan, and, according to Israeli television, the Minister for Absorption, Yitzhak Peretz, said that there were hundreds of empty housing units in this settlement waiting to be filled in the near future with new immigrants;

(5) On 8 July 1990, Soviet television reported that Israel had settled 60 families of new Soviet Jewish immigrants in settlements in the occupied Golan by the beginning of July 1990. The number of family members was given as 160 (Yediot Aharonot, 9 July 1990).

Statements demonstrating this Israeli policy include that made by Yitzhak Shamir to the Israeli newspaper Ma'ariv on 21 July 1987 and repeated by him in 1991:

"Those who speak of an International Peace Conference want to give up Judea, Samaria, the Gaza District and the Golan Heights completely. We've been accused of not being for peace, but the government coalition says openly that there's no question of giving up the lands of Israel, whether we are speaking of Judea, Samaria, the Gaza District, the Golan Heights or Jerusalem."

On 16 October 1987, Shamir stated to the newspaper Ha'aretz: "The city of Jerusalem, the Sharon, Samaria, Galilee and the Golan form an integral whole, and it is difficult to say that the Israeli people will ever give up these areas."

In a ministerial statement delivered on 22 December 1988, Yitzhak Shamir said that the policy of building settlements was continuing. On 19 March 1990, the Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Shamir, announced his adherence to the occupation of the Golan and said in his reply to leaders of Zionist settlements who had written to him to express their concern at the statements of former United States President Carter, that the idea of abandoning the Syrian Heights did not occur to any Israeli (Al-Sharq, 20 March 1990). In April 1990, the Israeli Parliament promulgated a decree stating, inter alia, that the fate of the Golan could not be the subject of any talks, again in the context of a statement about a united Jerusalem and a call for settlement in any portion thereof. Shamir sent a letter to the head of the Katzrin settlement on 11 February 1991, in which he promised the Israeli settlers that Israeli laws would remain in effect in the Golan for ever (Le Monde, 23 February 1991). The head of the above-mentioned Katzrin settlement embodies the Israeli expansionist mentality based on annexation and the use of force to impose the illegitimate policy of the fait accompli. He said to a French journalist who held an interview with him on 22 February 1991 in the occupied Golan: "The State would be making a great mistake if it placed the Golan on the negotiating table, for a man cannot do without his home! Furthermore, the Heights dominate the most important water resources in the country and are essential as a separation zone between Israel and Syria."

The settlement head, called Meir Monetz, emphasized that "one year ago, there were 200 empty apartments in the Katzrin settlement. Today no apartment is empty, and we have a programme to construct 600 new apartments and hope that the number of our settlement's population will be close on 25,000 by the year 2000." Expressing Israeli expansionist ambitions at the expense of the occupied Arab territories, on 7 August 1990, Yitzhak Shamir said: "We shall stay in the Golan for ever, and the Golan will not be a subject for bargaining. We would not think of giving up the Golan" (Ma'ariv, 8 August 1990). Moshe Arens, Israeli Minister of Defence, justified the continuation of illegal settlement operations in the occupied territories by stating on 12 May 1991: "Settlement and the Israeli Army are the two main factors of Israel's strength. Settlement in the occupied Arab territories establishes that these territories are a part of our country and our homeland and that we have a right to settle there." On 26 May 1991, Reuters reported in an inquiry on the occupied Syrian Golan that Ariel Sharon, the Israeli Minister of Housing, regarded the current construction campaign in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights as a dream come true for the strengthening of Israeli control over the Heights. Reuters added, quoting from a female Israeli settler living in the Golan (Katzrin settlement), named Tsed Katchen, that Sharon had given free rein to bulldozers, trucks and cement mixers in the Katzrin settlement where she lived and which was built in the place of the Syrian Arab village of Masrin. This Israeli settler said that nine years earlier the Israeli authorities had not developed the Golan and that here were the authorities now embarking on feverish construction. The members of the Israeli Government rushed to the occupied Golan in order to assure settlers that Israel would absolutely never soften over the Heights, and these authorities promised the Israeli settlers that, although they had been evacuated from the Yamit settlement (Sinai), they would see that they were not evicted from the Golan Heights except over their dead bodies.

## 2. Takeover of land

The Israeli authorities have promulgated many military orders amending the law applicable to the occupied Arab territories and the land-tenure system in order to justify the process of confiscation and takeover, invoking security and military exigencies. Various decisions have been taken in that regard, such as annulling all recourse in respect of land-tenure disputes dating back to the period of the British Mandate for Palestine, while other decrees have authorized the transfer of property only with the support of the military governor.

Most of the laws relating to confiscation have been amended in order to facilitate the full takeover of Arab lands. All lands belonging to individuals who were absent at the time of the occupation in 1967 are considered the property of the State, and, in 1979, the occupation authorities promulgated a law whereby Israeli nationals have the right to purchase land in the occupied Arab territories, thereby encouraging them to undertake Jewish settlement activities. The authorities have established settlements by means of military announcements, inasmuch as the land on which these settlements were established was regarded as areas "closed for security reasons". The

authorities also confiscated special choice areas from their lawful owners by a variety of means and prevented them from having access to it. Such lands were usually sown with fruit trees.

By means of such practices, the Israeli authorities confiscated 350 hectares of land owned by Syrian Arab citizens in the Golan Heights, decreed them to be military zones and then assigned them to a number of settlements set up close to Syrian villages. The Israeli authorities have taken over natural water resources, dug wells in territory belonging to citizens, after confiscating their land, and pumped off water from this land to new settlements.

In 1980, Israel confiscated agricultural land from Syrian peasants in the village of Julis, and on 12 April 1986, the occupation authorities conducted a survey of the area extending from south-west of the town of Majdal Shams to Jisr Ma'ad north of the village of Mas'ada and known as the Al-Qati' area, in preparation for taking it over. The area covers more than 1,000 dunums of fertile agricultural land. On 22 April 1986, the Israeli occupation authorities set up barbed wire around an area of 150 dunums in the Balan area, near Majdal Shams, and prevented the inhabitants from approaching it. This operation was kept secret in order to take the inhabitants by surprise and prevent them from organizing resistance. The Israeli newspaper Yediot Aharonot dated 27 May 1987 reported that the Israeli authorities would enclose other areas in order to prevent illegal building there.

On 24 July 1986, the Israeli newspaper Hamodia reported that the occupation authorities were levelling ground at Ayn al-Tinah and felling all trees in the area. The newspaper Hatzofeh reported on 28 October 1986 that a citizen had been arrested in the village of Buq'ata on the charge of appropriating 7 dunums of land and installing a water tank there for agricultural purposes and that the Israeli authorities and the land administration had had the area ploughed and the water tank destroyed.

As indicated in reports of the Director-General of the International Labour Office, the confiscation operations are continuing and the military authorities have been taking over land, which, after a set period, is included in the State lands to be exploited for the establishment of new settlements. The Israeli authorities make the inhabitants hand over their land deeds in order to put the official stamp on their takeover of the land.

On 20 July 1988, the newspaper Ha'aretz reported that the occupation authorities were setting fire to trees and natural forests on the land, taking them over and banning the citizens from the forests and that they had recently lit fires in parts of Galilee and the Golan, particularly forest and pasture areas. The total area of land burned by the occupiers in occupied Palestine up to May 1990 is more than 28,000 dunums, and forest fires in the Golan up to the same date have covered more than 18,000 dunums, within the framework of the multifaceted Israeli policy of smashing the economic base of the steadfastness of the citizens of the Golan in withstanding the Zionist occupation and adhering to the land and Syrian identity.

We should like to point out that of the 1,176 square kilometres of the Golan, the Syrian Arabs are able to utilize only 200,000 dunums, of which 15,000 dunums are arable.

The chain of incendiarism on the Golan's agricultural land continued during 1990, within the framework of desperate Israeli attempts to reduce the agricultural areas from which the Syrian population makes a livelihood. On 19 May 1990, a fabricated fire consumed approximately 2,500 dunums of protected natural plant-life land in the area extending from Wadi Hawwa and Zubatiyan in the central Golan to the north-east of Lake Tiberias. This fire destroyed extensive grazing areas, as well as many forest trees and wild plants (Ha'aretz, 20 May 1990), thus depriving Arab herdsmen in the Golan of grazing areas that formerly constituted a portion of their income. Two other fires broke out on 21 June 1990 and destroyed 1,500 more dunums of grazing land and woods (Ha'aretz, 5 June 1990). The Israeli newspaper Ma'ariv ascribed some of the fires to military exercises conducted by Israeli forces in the area (Ma'ariv, 21 May 1990).

Fires are set near the frontier strip to a width of 100 to 200 metres by the occupation authorities, exploiting the summer season, which is the period when plants and agricultural crops, such as wheat and barley, have dried and taking advantage of the rapid west-east wind so that the course of the fire destroys crops and orchards. Furthermore, any fire that passes beyond the wires to the mine fields will blow up these fields, preventing the approach of anyone who seeks to extinguish it. Naturally, the occupation authorities will not respond to appeals and calls for help from the owners of crops and land attacked by the fires from among the Golan population. In addition to this, the Israeli authorities confiscate the land of Arab owners in preparation for distributing it to their agents or annexing it to settlements or for military purposes. For example, the Israeli occupation authorities ordered the local council in the village of Majdal Shams to confiscate some land for distribution to agents, and these authorities began to oppress the people of the village in order to prevent them from using the land, in preparation for annexing it to the Neve Ativ settlement, for the purpose of maintaining the tourist/military road extending from Majdal Shams to Wadi al-Kaslah. The occupation authorities also laid hands on wagf land in the Tall al-Qas'ah area located to the north of the village of Mas'adah.

### 3. Takeover of water resources

The Israeli occupation authorities have been putting pressure on the inhabitants of the occupied Syrian Arab Golan in order to make them emigrate, making a livelihood difficult for them and weakening them economically by depriving them of water resources, diverting these to settlements and preventing the inhabitants from digging new wells.

Although the inhabitants of the Golan used to depend on the water of Birkat Ram in Mas'adah, which holds between 2 and 3 million cubic metres of water enclosed in volcanic rock, collecting the water in large metal tanks before supplying it to their lands by metal pipes, the occupation authorities

have imposed an embargo on pumping this water to irrigate apple and other orchards.

The inhabitants are faced with a major problem every time they wish to install tanks or dig new wells, since they have to obtain the prior permission of the governor, who refuses to give it and does not even let them install the plastic pipes they need for irrigating their orchards. By contrast, the Zionist settlers are allowed to pipe water to their lands, to dig wells and even to pump water from the wells of Arab farmers.

The Israeli authorities took to court many farmers in Golan villages who had refused to close their tanks, alleging use of State water resources and exploitation of and encroachment on neighbouring land.

The occupation authorities seek thereby to destroy the trade in apples and the cultivation of apples as a basic resource of local inhabitants. Consequently, they are confiscating spring water and diverting it to Zionist settlements. The Israeli authorities have seized the springs at Al-Ya'furi, Al-Mushayrifah and Ra's Abu Sa'd and installed pipes dozens of kilometres long in order to supply water from Mas'ada to the agricultural settlements established on the slopes of Tel Abu al-Nada, thereby significantly reducing the level of the water table whereby the Arab inhabitants irrigate their orchards and causing Syria to install a pipeline in 1984 in order to pump water to Majdal Shams. There is now a shortage of drinking water in Mas'ada, Buq'ata and Ayn al-Tinah, and the Syrian Government has dug new wells to irrigate these villages.

It should be noted that the development plan submitted to the World Zionist Organization in 1975 called for the supply of 7,590,000 cubic metres of water to Jewish settlers, who then numbered only 7,000, as compared with 2.1 million cubic metres for the more than 15,000 inhabitants of the occupied Syrian villages.

Artesian wells are now the only source of water (including drinking water), as a result of the confiscation of springs, and this affects the cultivation of crops, including apples, and also public health, particularly since the six existing wells are administered by the Israeli water authority and the water that reaches the inhabitants is often polluted.

Recently, the Israeli authorities forbade the population of Buq'ata to use the drinking water channelled to them through the pipeline from Syria and also forbade them to repair the feeder pipes on their side of the frontier.

Even worse, the occupation authorities impose overwhelming taxes on Syrian farmers in the Golan when they exploit the water resources on their land. For example, for the exploitation of irrigation water, the taxes amounted to 1 million Israeli new shekels (NIS) for the village of Buq'atah, NIS 1.5 million for the village of Majdal Shams and NIS 1 million for the village of Mas'adah. The Israeli enemy authorities confiscate water resources on the land of Syrian farmers and annex them to Israeli settlements, which

number 38. These water resources are in the Mushayrifah area opposite the village of Sahita and are made up of groundwater. The people there buy water to irrigate their land and water their apple trees, which are almost ruined. This is a highly important issue, because the purpose behind it is to force farmers to sell their land, with the apple trees standing, for the sake of a livelihood and consequently to bring them to their knees and take away their human autonomy.

#### 4. Economic and social changes

The annexation policy and settlement plans implemented in the occupied territories, including the Syrian Arab Golan, have had an impact in all spheres of economic and social life and have resulted in a deterioration in agriculture, industry and education. This situation has also had the effect of linking the territories' economy to the Israeli economy, diverting thousands of agricultural, industrial and crafts workers to the Israeli labour market and obliging the majority of the population, if they are able, to immigrate in order to earn their livelihood. In the course of 22 years of repressive occupation, no economic links have been established between the Zionist settlers and the patriots of the Golan.

In 1981, the occupation authorities raised taxes and continued to exert material pressure on the population. The occupation authorities prohibited the provision of any government services to any citizen who opposed the concept of annexation and the constraints on the population's freedom of movement in the Golan. That was in addition to the increase in the prices of supplies and the refusal of allowances to needy families, in spite of the taxes that were imposed on one half of the season's apple crop. Recently, the occupation authorities have prohibited exportation of the apple crop and even imposed a ban on buying it. In view of these measures, in the same year the population of the Golan staged demonstrations and a number of newspaper correspondents were arrested and their films of demonstrations, prisoners and detainees were burnt.

In 1984, the occupation authorities continued the same treatment, forbidding the citizens of Majdal Shams to export their produce to Syria.

With assistance from the forces of occupation, Israeli tax collectors perpetrated provocative acts and acts of intimidation, checking the identity of all individuals who passed through the many checkpoints set up at crossroads, which obliged many Syrian families to leave their villages reluctantly in search of a better life in order to escape the living conditions and the economic circumstances imposed on them by the occupation authorities.

This harassment continued in 1990. Many families' land was confiscated. A total economic blockade was imposed on the Golan, the freedom of the population of the Golan to work was restricted, workers' wages were reduced, workers registered with the military Administration were obliged to carry out unpleasant work (tarring roads and repairing sewers, for example), and many

workers were wrongfully accused of collaborating with the Syrian authorities, the aim being to give the occupier a pretext for arresting and imprisoning them and preventing them from working on their land.

The Syrian Arab citizens of the Golan celebrated the anniversary of Syrian independence, during the period from 15 to 17 April 1990. On that occasion, the Israeli authorities arrested dozens of people and imposed new lump-sum taxes; refusal to pay meant being sent to prison. All these efforts were aimed, basically, at impoverishing the population of the Golan, weakening patriotic resistance and forcing the population to submit or emigrate, with a view to depopulating the Golan.

The occupation authorities impose crippling taxes of numerous kinds, which weigh heavily on citizens. There is a dollar tax on drugs, the income tax, another tax called the "value-added tax" and another called the "national insurance tax", which is imposed on all producers, in addition to the charges imposed on vehicles. The Israeli occupation authorities bargain over the freedom of children and students arrested on nationalist occasions, demanding payment of the sum of \$100 for each child or student released following arrest. Adult Syrian citizens who are arrested are released on payment of \$150 each.

#### Agriculture

A simple economic comparison between the Syrian Arab producer on his land and his consumption of the foodstuffs produced by the occupation authorities gives us some idea of the volume of financial and economic extortion practised by these authorities in respect of Syrian citizens. The price of one kilogram of apples is the equivalent of 50 cents, and on it are imposed an income tax and a value added tax, while a felafel sandwich costs \$1.20 and the land tax is estimated at \$75 per month for an area of 5 dunums. The occupation authorities prohibit the population from selling their agricultural produce on the markets. It must be sold to an Israeli merchant to be priced and taxed appropriately. As a result of these severe pressures, some Syrian citizens are forced to sell their land in order to pay the crippling taxes imposed on them.

Unquestionably, the suffering of the Golan Arabs in the agricultural sphere is regarded as one of the most serious aspects of their suffering because agriculture is the main source of livelihood for the population of the occupied Golan. The Israelis have realized this and have tightened the restrictions on the marketing of agricultural crops and produce, limiting their distribution and marketing to Israeli companies only, in order to impose the price set by these companies. In addition, the occupation authorities have failed to ensure the necessary quantity of water to irrigate the agricultural and wooded areas from which the people make a living. When the population tries to overcome their problems by digging wells, the Israeli authorities hasten to fill up those wells, and they also prevent them from approaching other water sources in the area. They cut the pipes whereby the Arab citizens try to resolve their water problem, as happened in the village

of Ayn Qunyah, where the frontier guard cut two kilometres of piping laid by the villagers to irrigate their agricultural lands. They alleged that the piping had been laid illegally. At the same time, the Israeli authorities are stealing the water of Arab villages to channel it to the orchards of settlers in the occupied Syrian Heights.

The agricultural situation in the Golan deteriorated owing to the confiscation of extensive tracts of fertile land, and, as a result, the people of the region now have only 20,000 dunums in their possession. In addition, there was the takeover of water resources by the Israeli occupier; the refusal to grant permits to the population to dig new wells on their land; measures designed both to make farmers' access to their land difficult - consisting, in particular, in the placement of mines both around and on their land - and to separate farms from one another by means of surrounding them by Jewish settlements, with a view to taking possession of them and denying the agricultural products of the population of the region access to markets so that they could not compete with Israeli settlements products; not to mention the confiscation by Israeli tax collectors of stored apples on a variety of pretext and the destruction of cold-storage plants.

The chief problem facing Syrian Arab farmers is the fact that their apple crop, which is their main source of income, no longer has market access. The measure denying the apple crop market access was adopted on 12 March 1968, the day on which Shlomo Weizmann, President of the Israeli Farmers' Union - using as a pretext the unremitting hatred and hostility shown by the population of the Golan in respect of the occupation forces - announced a boycott of the apples grown by them.

In economic terms, that was to have a catastrophic effect on the population of the Golan, whose living conditions worsened, with all that that implies (for example, a deterioration in health and social conditions and an increase in the number of unemployed Syrian workers, who have become a source of cheap labour for the Israeli economy).

#### Animal husbandry

The occupation authorities are endeavouring to reduce the amount of pastureland by building roads, uprooting trees and setting fires, with the aim of dealing a death-blow to economic activity in the region and depriving the Arab population of the Golan of milk. (It is known that the population is supplied with milk by the region's goat farmers.) The Israeli authorities therefore issued decrees forbidding the raising of black goats without a special permit. This is used by the occupation authorities to justify the confiscation of the majority of black goats and sell them at absurdly low prices - on the pretext that the goats are a threat to the environment.

The attempt to reduce pastureland in the Golan is not all that is suffered by Arab herdsmen there. There are other brutal practices carried out by the occupation authorities against Arab herdsmen. The most prominent is the laying of anti-personnel mines around many pasture areas without informing

the Arab herdsmen of that so that they might avoid them. This has led to the deaths of many Arab herdsmen. One example of that is the report from some sources that an Arab herdsman was killed on 5 September 1990 when a mine blew up under his feet when he was trying to enter a pasture area near the village of Mas'adah. The occupation authorities, to justify the existence of mines in that pasture area, merely cited their usual practice of security requirements (Ha'arets, 6 September 1990).

### Industry

The Israeli occupation authorities have prevented the emergence in the occupied territories of a local economic policy to promote the establishment of enterprises and workshops operating for the benefit of citizens by refusing to give their approval to any effort to promote the regional economy's various production sectors. They also prohibit the promotion of Arab investments or the opening of credits and do not permit the establishment of any industrial or agro-industrial project, for fear that they might compete with Israeli producers, who completed construction of a cannery in the Katzrin settlement in the occupied Golan. In addition, the occupation authorities exercised control over prices, stocks and the marketing of virtually all fruit grown in the Golan, as well as over all other necessities of life there.

The occupation authorities prohibit the population of the Golan from cooperating to open credits in order to set up a cold-storage network, make cooperative investments and set up carpentry and storage facilities, the aim being to impoverish them, to oblige them to buy their supplies from the Israeli settlements and to promote the penetration of Israeli industrial products, starting with blocks, tiles, wood products, iron-mongering and equipment for quarrying marble. We wish to emphasize a well-known fact, namely, that before 1967 the village of Majdal Shams was one of the industrial centres of the Golan governorate (ironsmith work, carpentry, building materials, agricultural tools). However, most of these installations have fallen into disuse.

### 5. Situation with regard to education

The main goal of the Israeli occupation authorities' education policy is to stifle any national feeling among the population of the occupied Arab Golan, with a view to cutting them off from their national, historical and cultural roots and severing their ties with their mother country, Syria.

The Israeli occupation authorities violate the principle of the inviolability of the occupied Arab territories' educational and cultural institutions. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has adopted a whole series of resolutions condemning Israel in that connection. However, the occupation authorities fail to heed those resolutions and continue to engage in the practices in question, committing acts of terrorism against students and teaching staff and subjecting them to racial discrimination. As a result of this policy, which the population of the Golan has protested against, the situation with regard to education has

deteriorated. In implementing the policy in question, the occupation authorities have engaged in the following practices:

(1) They have replaced Syrian Arab curricula by Israeli curricula, prohibited Syrian textbooks, forced Syrian students to learn Hebrew, and imposed education policies inciting hatred, intolerance and religious fanaticism, with the aim of eliminating any Arab national characteristics from the education provided. They have replaced the Arabic names of places and rivers with Hebrew names;

(2) They have arbitrarily dismissed many qualified teachers - because of their nationalist views - and have replaced them by unqualified teachers; and they have obliged the teachers who they have not dismissed to teach the requirements of Israeli curriculum. The teachers dismissed include Bahjat Salman Mar'i, Nazir Khatir, Ghassan Abu Salih, Majid Mahmud, Salih Muhammad Umashah and Hasan Yahya al-Qaysh from Baq'ata; Hasan Fakhr al-Din, Qasim Mahmud al-Safadi, Najah Abu Jabal, Wahban al-Safadi and Farhan Ali al-Safadi from Majdal Shams; Najat Hasan al-Safadi from Mas'adah, who is currently in the country; Nazim Nasr al-Din Sa'b and Tahir Mundhir from Ayn Qunyah;

(3) They have closed many schools;

(4) School premises have become dilapidated, and the ones remaining open no longer meet the educational conditions or have the essential requirements. Nor is the inauguration of new schools permitted. The schools do not have the means to provide proper medical monitoring; there is, in fact, only one doctor in the region providing medical care for pupils. Furthermore, there is blatant intervention in most school curricula in the Golan, imposing a lower level than that prevailing in Israeli schools. The curricula in Arab schools are drawn up to serve Zionist purposes and ambitions in our Arab territory. The Hebrew language is taught to children from the first grade, and the subject of ancient and modern Jewish history is emphasized, while the history of the ancient civilizations of the Middle East is distorted;

(5) The occupation authorities impose harsh constraints on all administrative procedures and withhold personal documents from children from families that oppose the occupation, thus preventing them from attending school in the region or elsewhere;

(6) They have been preventing students from the Golan from completing their higher education either at Syrian Arab universities (since 1982) or at universities in socialist countries, and they exert pressure on consulates in order to ensure that they do not issue visas to students wishing to go somewhere else in order to complete their higher education. As for the few Arabs who are permitted to attend Israeli universities, they did not have an opportunity to study in the fields in which they are best qualified;

(7) They raid the premises of educational institutions;

(8) They have arrested both students and teachers;

(9) They hinder access to employment for the small number of Syrian Arab citizens holding Israeli university degrees.

6. The labour situation

The economic and social situations in all the occupied Arab territories cannot be divorced from the inhuman conditions in which workers and the majority of the population are living, in view of the total lack of civilized laws and the contempt for the laws of the international community under Israeli occupation.

Throughout Palestine and the occupied Arab territories, including the Golan, Arab workers suffer racial discrimination and coercion, being forced to endure working conditions that are extremely precarious by comparison with those enjoyed by Israeli workers in respect of security, national insurance, wages, health care, job security and general safety, as well as in respect of trade union assembly.

In the occupied areas, Arab workers are not free to establish trade unions or to exercise their trade union freedoms under the occupation regime. Whatever trade union premises Arab workers might have are always liable to be raided by the police, threatening to shut them down. Most union members and union leaders have been subjected to administrative detention, house arrest or deportation, so that Arab workers might continue to suffer the worst forms of exploitation and to work in inhumane conditions, enduring all forms of racial discrimination and set apart from their Israeli counterparts.

In this connection, appearing before the United States Special Committee on Preferences on 17 November 1988, Ms. Mary Rosenbluth said that the Israeli authorities were continually violating the rights of Arab workers to form associations and trade unions; that they were shutting down the premises of existing associations and expelling union members; and that they were also prosecuting Arab workers and prohibiting them from defending their rights, as documented in reports by the United States Department of State, which noted that the Israeli authorities had rejected over 100 applications from Palestinians to establish trade unions on the pretext that they failed to meet security standards. Ms. Rosenbluth pointed out that imprisoned Arab workers were denied their right to a fair trial and that deportation methods against union members accused of stirring up violence and unrest were arbitrary.

Appearing before the same committee on 17 November 1988, Ms. Judith Chomsky said that, while the statement by the Israeli Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, as reported by the Israeli Embassy in Washington, contained a number of untruths, it did acknowledge that workers in the occupied territories did not receive unemployment benefits, family allowances or retirement pensions. The Israelis were deliberately distorting the rules established by the International Labour Organisation so as to give a semblance of legitimacy to Israeli practices. Ms. Chomsky called for the exclusion of

Israel from the Generalized System of Preferences because of what she saw as its failure to extend internationally recognized rights to the workers.

The International Labour Organisation recently published a report warning of the dangers of the situation and living conditions of Arab workers in the occupied Arab territories as a result of the arbitrary practices of the Israeli occupation authorities based on stripping the population of their legitimate rights. The Israeli authorities have resorted to strengthening the economic noose around their necks since the outbreak of the uprising through efforts to rid the land of its legitimate owners and then Judaize it. The report also brought out the fact that, in the context of the policy of racial discrimination, Israel is laying its hands on the economy of the occupied territory and subjecting the citizens to economic harassment by various means, including withholding permission to sell their produce and preventing them from overseeing that produce or engaging in their crafts or trades, in order to force them to take up employment on Israeli farms for absurdly low wages and in harsh working conditions in contravention of all international customs and laws. In this connection, we should mention the two resolutions adopted by the General Conference of the International Labour Organisation, resolution 9 of 1974, condemning the policy of racial discrimination applied against Arab workers and the violation of trade union freedoms by the occupation authorities in Palestine and the other occupied Arab territories, and resolution 2 of 1980, calling upon the occupation authorities to put an immediate end to the establishment of new settlements. We should also mention the resolutions on this subject adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council in 1990:

United Nations General Assembly resolution 45/69 of 6 December 1990 (para. 5);

United Nations General Assembly resolution 45/68 of 6 December 1990 (para. 3).

The employment situation in the occupied Syrian Arab Golan is characterized by a number of essentially seasonal features, Zionist settlers/landowners and the owners of Israeli businesses hire workers during peak periods, imposing any terms they wish.

The low living standard among the Arab population in the occupied territories and the villages of the Golan have prompted inhabitants to find work by any means they can in order to increase their income. This situation is the direct result of a number of measures taken by the Israeli authorities to bring Arab workers from the Golan into the Israeli job market, so as to capitalize on the difference in wages between the two regions and weaken those workers' links with their land and their nation. Vocational training centres have been established to that end; such centres have attracted youths and students from schools which had no teachers and thus have been a poison apple to deprive them of an education.

In 1979 alone, more than 1,786 youths were trained at such centres to work in construction, excavation, road surfacing, agricultural workshops, drainage work and all kinds of low-paid harsh work. The most outstanding features of the tragic positions of Arab workers in the occupied Arab territories are clear from the following:

(1) In the past five years, the Israeli economy has absorbed over 40 per cent of the active population of the occupied territories in order to meet its demands for cheap, skilled Arab labour;

(2) Most of the Arab workers are obliged to do difficult, unskilled and poorly paid work (black labour);

(3) According to seasonal agricultural conditions, the unemployment ratio decreases, causing stagnation in industrial employment and unemployment among Arab workers;

(4) The rights of Arab workers and Israeli workers are not equal either as to the level and nature of work or as to the level of wages;

(5) The Israeli economy uses cheap Arab labour. There is also an imbalance in business relations arising from the heavy dependence on the job market in Israel and the consequences of the domination that has accompanied the occupation, as well as the consequences of arbitrary controls and measures restricting the export of produce and the manufacture of products used in agriculture;

(6) The effect of inflation, and of the impact of inflation on the wages policy, has been to attract workers, particularly from border regions;

(7) Arab farmers cannot obtain licences to export their agricultural produce to the European Community;

(8) The vocational training which children receive at school is nothing more than elementary technical training;

(9) The work permits issued to Arab workers only appear to give job security; there are no guarantees of employment, and employees may lose their jobs when their permits expire, or even for any other spurious reason given by the employer;

(10) Arab workers are denied recourse to the courts, and the option to file grievances with military tribunals exists only on paper;

(11) Deductions are made from the wages of Arab workers on the same basis as Israeli workers, but the former do not enjoy the same social benefits;

(12) The military regime in effect since 1979 still exists, with all the accompanying restrictions on civil and trade union rights, and on freedom of movement;

(13) Arab workers are denied full or even temporary membership in the Histadrut; they therefore cannot defend their rights through that channel;

(14) The Israeli occupation authorities do not permit technical workers with university degrees, most of whom are graduates of Syrian universities, while others are graduates of the universities of Eastern European States, to practise their professions, on many spurious pretexts, such as the assertion that they have leaked information to their Syrian Arab homeland or that their knowledge and academic studies are questionable. This has turned the technical workers into agricultural workers in their own fields or common labourers sweeping streets and laying drains.

#### 7. The health situation

Since the Arab territories were first occupied by Israel in 1967, Israel has pursued a well-established policy regarding medical institutions; it seeks to undermine them completely so that Arab patients will be forced to obtain treatment in Israeli hospitals. The occupation authorities believe that the continued functioning of these medical establishments constitutes a demonstration of independence from them that is inconsistent with their policy of Judaization and stamping out all traces of Arab identity in the occupied areas.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has recalled that the situation in the health field worsened seriously in the wake of the restrictions imposed by the occupation authorities in the health sector and the arbitrary and inhumane measures applied by those authorities.

The report of the WHO Tripartite Committee states that the health situation in the occupied Syrian Arab Golan has deteriorated in recent years, largely because of the measures taken by Israel. The report specifies that the Golan villages have only four clinics and that those facilities cannot function normally under such conditions.

As a result of this situation, nearly 75 per cent of the region's patients and inhabitants go to West Bank hospitals run by Arab charitable organizations; however, in emergencies they are forced to seek treatment in Israeli hospitals. Furthermore, the Water Department cuts off the water supply of villages in the Golan when groundwater levels fall because the occupation authorities are pumping the water from Mas'ada for use by the settlements. For its part, the Sick Fund (Kupat Holim) refuses to respond to emergency calls from inhabitants of Syrian villages; it does not send ambulances when they request them and fails to come to the aid of pregnant women and gravely ill children.

Chief among the arbitrary measures adopted by the Israeli authorities are the following:

(1) Since 1967, the development of hospitals, clinics and other health-care centres has been impeded;

(2) The Israeli authorities are trying to decrease the level of services provided by Arab health-care centres by cutting back all their equipment and facilities;

(3) They interfere with the provision of services by the centres and occasionally close them, citing security reasons;

(4) Each year, appropriations for Arab health facilities are reduced, while foreign aid and gifts are prevented from reaching their destination on time.

In the occupied villages of the Syrian Arab Golan, health problems are aggravated by the fact that only the absolute minimum is done to provide first aid and preventive and therapeutic care. The population complains of a deterioration in the health field, as demonstrated by the following:

(1) The inhabitants of Arab villages in the Golan lack any means of building hospitals with a view to improving their health situation;

(2) Under instructions from the Israeli authorities, an Israeli identity card must be produced in order to use the facilities set up for Sick Fund participants and to obtain children's and old people's benefits provided by the National Insurance Institute (Keren Habituah Haleumi). In addition, a health card fee of over 2,000 Israeli pounds has recently been instituted; this measure reflects a total lack of humanitarian feeling and is designed to exploit patients and impose Israeli nationality on them by force;

(3) The cost of medical screening, treatments and medicines is high, and the four existing clinics cannot meet citizens' needs; they lack medical equipment and specialists - for example, they have no gynaecologist and no paediatrician. Moreover, there is only one school doctor for all the schools in the Golan, and this doctor is not backed by an alternate.

As a further measure of repression, the occupation authorities refuse to allow Syrian nationals in the Golan to travel outside the territory for treatment, even if they require emergency assistance, unless they obtain - sometimes literally poised between life and death - an official exit permit bearing the signature of the local military governor. If the governor refuses to grant a sick national the required permit - which occurs frequently - the effect is tantamount to a death sentence. Justification for such a decision - which is not open to challenge or appeal - is always at hand, namely, the Israeli authorities' reference to so-called security requirements.

(4) Doctors are available only during a few hours and on certain days of the week;

(5) There are no centres which specialize in maternal and child care, and in particular no pregnancy-monitoring centres;

- (6) There is not a single pharmacy in any village in the Golan;
- (7) Schools do not provide adequate medical services, and standards of cleanliness are low;
- (8) The Sick Fund provides assistance only as and when it chooses;
- (9) The population complains of water pollution;
- (10) Despite a substantial proliferation of mosquitoes and the resurgence of epidemics, the authorities take no action;
- (11) There is no drainage system in the occupied villages for sewage disposal.

8. Illegal archaeological excavations and looting of antiquities

Ever since Israel occupied the Golan, operations have been conducted to excavate and steal antiquities, in contravention of the international principles prohibiting such activity which were signed by Israel at New Delhi in 1956. The occupation authorities are also systematically destroying the Syrian national heritage in the Golan, as they did shortly before their withdrawal from liberated Quneitra in 1973, when Israel completely destroyed the town (its national museum, five churches, mosques, buildings, institutes and both Islamic and Christian graveyards). The Golan region is an ancient one with a history stretching back to the Stone Age. According to Israel's own studies, 209 valuable archaeological sites have been identified in the Golan; the occupation authorities have seized and appropriated them and altered history to record them as "Jewish-factor antiquities". A United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) report prepared in 1990 by Professor Raymond Lier, the personal representative of the Director-General, criticized the occupation authorities' excavations for antiquities in the occupied territories, including the Golan, since 1967. The report stated that the excavations being carried out by Israel ran counter to the international principles signed by the Israeli Government at New Delhi in 1956, which prohibit damage to archaeological sites in territories under occupation (Ma'ariv, 9 December 1990). As for the stealing of antiquities, Israeli sources report that a cache containing some 9,000 bronze coin pieces minted in the fourth century A.D. were found at the Katzrin settlement site in the occupied Golan Heights: this valuable archaeological treasure had of course been looted by the occupation authorities in accordance with their persistent practice (Al Hamishmar, 20 August 1990). The occupation authorities altered history by attributing the antiquities to the so-called "Jewish factor" in history, meaning the alleged role of the Jews in the history of the region: in this way they appropriate archaeological discoveries after falsifying them for their own contemporary purposes of colonial expansion. Archaeological studies in the Golan have been published in a number of specialized reviews and periodicals, including Palestine Exploration Quarterly, July-December 1982, pages 129-142, which includes an article on the Jewish and Christian communities in the Golan in Roman and

Byzantine times entitled "Jewish and Christian communities in the Roman and Byzantine Gaulanitis". The January-June 1985 edition (pp. 60-68) of the same periodical contains a study entitled "Comments on the Jewish and Christian communities in Byzantine Palestine" by Zi Yumauz. An article in the French-language periodical Revue Biblique, No. 2 (April 1984), also contained an article comparing the proportion of Nabatean Arab antiquities in the Golan village of Faraj to the proportion of Byzantine antiquities (pp. 254-260).

9. Human rights violations in the occupied Arab territories

Ever since the occupation in 1967, Arab citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan have been living at the mercy of emergency legislation and arbitrary treatment by the authorities responsible for direct military rule, which subject them to tyranny, injustice and oppression. The military authorities freely impose curfews whenever they wish and for as long as they choose or determine. Since Israel's announcement of its decision to annex the occupied Syrian heights in the Golan on 14 December 1981, there has been an escalation in Israeli violations of human rights legislation, together with an increase in acts of repression, campaigns of detention and successive waves of terror with a view to ensuring that Israeli laws are applied and, in particular, that Israeli identity is imposed on Arab nationals. There has also been a dangerous escalation in Israel's violations of international and humanitarian law in the occupied Arab territories in general, leading the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council to adopt many successive resolutions year after year. The latest resolutions of the Security Council in this connection were resolution 672 (1990) of 12 October 1990, expressing alarm at the violence which took place at the Haram al-Sharif and other Holy Places of Jerusalem, resulting in over 20 Palestinian deaths and the injury of more than 150 people; and resolution 681 (1990) of 20 December 1990, which expresses concern at the dangerous deterioration of the situation in the territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, and at the deportation of four Palestinians from the occupied territories in contravention of Israel's obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention. We may also note in this context General Assembly resolutions 45/74 A, B, C, D, E, F and G of 11 December 1990, concerning the investigation of Israeli practices in the occupied territories and Israel's violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949: these resolutions deplore the establishment of Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories, including the Golan, and strongly condemn Israel for its refusal to comply with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations concerning the Golan, particularly Security Council resolution 497 (1981), in which the Council, inter alia, decided that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Arab Golan was null and void and without international legal effect.

It is noteworthy that the times at which the true face of military rule and its apparatus of repression is seen at its most repugnant are those when the Arab population of the Golan rebels in protest against the practices and continued existence of the occupation. When the occupation authorities use all the means at their disposal to put down the population's rebellion or protest, they resort to severe beatings and sometimes fire live bullets at

those nationals who engage in demonstrations, besides raiding houses and schools, arresting citizens, throwing them into prison and engaging in other intimidatory practices of repression. The following is an illustration of the most noteworthy practices of repression by the occupation authorities in the Golan during the year 1990:

(1) The Galilee police authorities claimed to have uncovered two local guerrilla organizations in the occupied Arab villages of the Golan. Before this announcement by the police on 13 February 1990, seven youths from Majdal Shams and Buq'ata were reported to have been arrested. The first organization was said to consist of youths from the two villages who planned to kidnap an Israeli soldier in the Golan and to use him as a means of exerting pressure on the Israeli authorities to release Arab prisoners in the Golan. Police sources said that this organization's membership consisted of four youths, who were arrested. The second organization was said to be a group of whom two members were accused of belonging to the first organization, as well as three other students. The members of the latter organization intended to throw Molotov cocktails and raise Syrian flags on the anniversary of the imposition of Israeli law in the Golan;

(2) On Wednesday, 14 February 1990, the noble population of the Golan reiterated its rejection of the Israeli occupation and of Israel's 1981 annexation law by declaring a general strike in all villages of the occupied Golan which brought life to an almost complete stop. The strike, which affected all public utilities and schools, including even taxis and private shops, was held on the eighth anniversary of the historic six-month strike declared by the Arabs of the Golan in 1982 in protest against the annexation decision.

Fears as to how the situation might develop caused a massive deployment of regular and border police forces, with full military equipment, in the occupied villages of the Golan, which were encircled by the early hours of the morning of 14 February. In addition, Minister of Police Haim Bar-Lev himself accompanied the Inspector-General of Police, David Kraus, for a first-hand view of the situation. By way of explanation, Bar-Lev said that no demonstrations must be held and that the anniversary must pass off quietly.

The occupied village of Buq'ata was the scene of a major gathering of young people, despite the intensive Israeli military presence there. Youths from the village distributed the national document which had been issued by dozens of noble citizens of the Golan in 1982 and in which they affirmed their categorical rejection of the occupation. The publication Strike - which is published once each year - was also distributed by the League of University Graduates.

On 24 February 1990, the Syrian Arab citizens of the occupied Golan issued a statement deploring Zionist migration to Arab Palestine and the Golan. They described such migration as a practical application of the policy of Zionist expansionism in Arab territory and a move to fulfil Zionist aspirations of establishing a so-called Greater Israel and of settling new

colonizers in the place of Arabs, the original owners of land which they had inherited through the ages of history from their fathers and forefathers, only to be expelled from it. These citizens confirmed their rejection of the occupation and of the Zionist settlement policy, which at this particular stage constitutes an attempt to thwart the courageous uprising in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip and to undermine resistance to the occupation by the noble population of the Golan. The statement also affirmed the continuation of militant solidarity between our people in the Golan and Palestine in resistance against the Zionist occupation, as well as the noble population of the Golan's endorsement and support of the courageous uprising with all the means at its disposal.

(3) On 17 April 1990, on the anniversary of the Syrian independence holiday, Syrian Arab citizens in the villages of the occupied Golan staged a major popular demonstration during which they raised Syrian flags and banners condemning the occupation, urging withdrawal and reaffirming the determination of the area's citizens to persist in their struggle against the occupation and its criminal repressive practices.

The occupation authorities immediately proceeded to deploy large military units in the occupied Syrian villages, to set up roadblocks and to dispatch street patrols. They also arrested a number of citizens known for their ability to incite national sentiments. According to Israeli radio, large contingents of regular and border police forces had been deployed in different quarters of the occupied villages by the evening of 16 April with a view to preventing people from commemorating the independence holiday. The forces also carried out a series of operations designed to pre-empt trouble, the most notable being the imposition of a curfew on all villages from the evening of 16 April.

However, all these measures were of no avail because citizens insisted on commemorating the independence holiday. This led to bloody clashes with the occupation forces, particularly at Majdal Shams. The Israeli police subsequently detained a number of the demonstrators for questioning.

Meanwhile, the strike spread to all occupied villages in the Golan, including schools, shops and transport. As a result, the occupation authorities endeavoured to use force and violence to break the strike.

(4) At the end of the first week of July 1990, the district court at Nazareth handed down a suspended sentence of imprisonment for one year and a fine of 2,000 new shekels to Syrian entertainment director Sulayman Bariq, who had begun work at a students' summer camp adjacent to the occupied village of Majdal Shams in the summer of 1989. The Israeli indictment adopted by the court in its judgement stated that Sulayman Bariq had induced students at Majdal Shams to stick banners on tents at the camp bearing the names of martyrs of the uprising in the occupied Arab territories. The indictment went on to say that Bariq had thus incited the students to support the uprising.

(5) Personnel from the Israel Lands Administration cut down peach and apple trees on a 400-dunum plot belonging to Mas'ada resident Salim Bathish. According to the 4 April 1990 edition of Davar, the trees were cut down on orders from the district court at Nazareth, amidst protests from the local population.

(6) Two Syrian nationals - Fayiz Sa'id Mahmud, 20 years of age, and Mahmud Hasan al-Safadi - were intercepted by a patrol of occupation soldiers while walking along the road leading north from the occupied heights. The members of the patrol fired on them, killing the first of the two, and arrested the latter. In order to justify this criminal act, the occupation authorities alleged that both nationals were on their way to their homeland, Syria, and that they had gathered military information about Israel for submission to the Syrian authorities. However, the Israeli authorities did not find any document in their possession at the site of the incident. The killing of the first youth and the arrest of the other gave rise to a wave of anger and resentment among Arab nationals at Majdal Shams and other occupied villages of the Golan, causing the Israeli authorities to launch a campaign of arrests. They detained seven citizens for questioning, and a large number of these youths remain subject to detention and questioning (Ha'aretz, 2 November 1990).

(7) At the end of December 1990, the Israeli Supreme Court announced its rejection of the appeal lodged by four citizens of the Golan against their sentences of imprisonment for periods of between 18 and 27 years. The reasons given by the Court for its decision to reject the appeal included an allegation that the youths concerned had seriously violated Israel's security by plotting - according to the Court - to abduct an Israeli soldier with a view to forcing the Israeli authorities to agree to the release of Syrian security detainees held in Israeli prisons.

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